

--(NDVARHIVKADVAQSSYGLY) (SEQ ID NO: 9) which matches the N-terminal sequence of the purified KP9860 protease. Judging from the N-terminal sequence, the mature region of KP9860 protease gene was deduced to be the 1302 bp, encoding 434 amino acid residues (SEQ ID NO: 4), molecular weight 45310 Da). Upstream of the ORF, there were observed sequences which are deduced to be a promoter region (-35 region: ttgtgt, -10 region: tacgat) and a ribosome-binding site (SD sequence: aggagt). Downstream of the termination codon (taa), there was an inverted repeat having a free energy of -26.2 kcal/mol, which is deduced to be a terminator.

The procedure of Example 5 was repeated, to thereby analyze the entire nucleotide sequence and amino acid sequence of each of the genes of KP-43 protease and KP-1790 protease. The results are shown in SEQ ID NOS: 4 and 5.---

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as shown in the marked-up copy following this amendment.

- 4. (Amended) A gene encoding an alkaline protease according to Claim 1.
- 5. (Amended) A microorganism producing an alkaline protease according to Claim 1.
- 6. (Amended) A detergent composition containing an alkaline protease according to

Claim 1.--